

System Configuration Team (SCT)

**Reasonable & Prudent Measure #26
Meeting Notes
July 22, 1999**

DRAFT

Greetings and Introductions.

The July 22 meeting of the System Configuration Team was held at the National Marine Fisheries Service offices in Portland, Oregon. The meeting was chaired by Bill Hevlin of NMFS, and was facilitated by Cathryn Collis. The agenda and a list of attendees for the July 22 meeting are attached as Enclosures A and B.

The following is a distillation (not a verbatim transcript) of items discussed at the meeting, together with actions taken on those items. Please note that some enclosures referenced may be too lengthy to routinely include with the meeting notes; copies of all enclosures referred to in the minutes are available upon request from Kathy Ceballos of NMFS at 503/230-5420.

I. Review and Discussion of Draft Scope of Work for John Day ESBS Hydraulic Modeling Evaluation.

The Corps' John Kranda distributed Enclosure C, a memo covering the design of Vertical Barrier Screens at John Day Dam. He apologized to the SCT for the length of time it has taken to develop a more formal scope of work and plan of study for this project, and promised that these more detailed documents will be distributed for review within two weeks. He suggested that it may be appropriate to plan a special FFDRWG meeting to discuss this project once the detailed scope of work is available.

Kranda spent a few minutes going through Enclosure C, which described the existing VBS system at John Day, plans for the design of the new VBS system, the schedule for this effort and some notable facts. Kranda noted that the design of the new VBS will require a model study, which is expected to take eight months to complete and cost approximately \$160,000. The model study can begin October 1 without any impacts to other projects; if the work begins before October 1, there will be significant impacts to

the ongoing turbine passage model testing work. If the work begins October 1, model results will be available in June 2000.

Steve Rainey shared some of NMFS' thoughts about gateway turbulence, orifice configuration and the parameters of the hydraulic modeling evaluation; Rock Peters noted that this is a very complex problem, which is going to require some major effort, on the part of the Corps and FFDRWG, to solve. Kranda observed that, if it is necessary to modify the orifices on all 48 bays at the project, that could involve a very significant outlay – it would probably be useful if we can develop at least a ballpark estimate of how much it might cost to modify each orifice early on in this evaluation program.

Ruff said that, as SCT co-chair, he is extremely disappointed that the Corps was unable to present a detailed scope of work for the John Day ESBS hydraulic modeling evaluation at today's meeting. There was general agreement at the June FFDRWG meeting that the Corps would present this scope of work at the June SCT meeting, Ruff said; they did not do so. As the minutes reflect, at the June SCT meeting, the Corps was tasked to develop that scope of work for presentation at today's meeting, and they still have not done so, said Ruff. I'm very disappointed that we've lost another month, he said; my hope was that we could get at least some of the model results prior to next spring, and that doesn't appear very likely now.

In response to a question, Peters said the special FFDRWG meeting to discuss the scope of work will likely take place during the week of August 16, although August 13 is also a possibility. Ruff suggested that it would probably be most efficient for FFDRWG to review this scope of work, then present their comments and suggestions at the August SCT meeting. To summarize, then, said Collis, the SCT will review the scope of work for this effort at its August meeting, and will also hear FFDRWG's thoughts on the Corps' proposed scope of work at that time. It was so agreed.

II. Lower Granite Surface Bypass Evaluation – Review of Preliminary Results from 1999 Tests and Discussion of FY'00 Study Plan.

Rainey and Lynn Reece distributed Enclosure D, a packet of information relating to the development of the Lower Granite surface bypass/collector prototype. They each spent a few minutes going through this information, touching on 1999 SBC operations, FY'00 SBC test objectives at Lower Granite, the proposed test program for FY'00, proposed modifications to the SBC prototype in FY'00, SBC 2000 biological monitoring plans, other considerations (structural integrity), SBC test objectives for 2001, proposed SBC modifications for 2001, as well as information on the fish behavior modeling program and the numeric modeling program. Please refer to Enclosure D for details of Rainey's and Reece's presentations.

Comments, questions, discussion? Collis asked. What are the chances of looking at the overflow weir in 2000, rather than waiting until 2001? Ruff asked. I don't think we can get there, physically, Reece replied. We've been talking about that for some time now, Rainey added, but as we've looked into it in more detail, there are simply too many

steps that need to be accomplished before that can be done. In addition, since we only have one more year remaining on our structure, it makes more sense to defer the overflow weir evaluation until 2001, so that we don't lose the use of the entrances during the final year this structure is in service.

It seems to me that one of our highest priorities should be to see whether or not we can improve in-river passage at this project – reduce delay, get more fish through the spillway, Hevlin said. I believe the higher-flow, 4 Kcfs test will give us a very good idea of what higher flow is going to do for us, Reece replied.

Has the Corps developed a package of information, showing the proposed test objectives for FY'00 and FY'01, together with budget and schedule? Ron Boyce asked. Also, where are we in the decisionmaking process for the Lower Granite surface collector program for FY'00 and FY'01? To answer your first question, replied Mike Mason, we did develop a workplan for FY'00 which you should have had since March – it has evolved a little, but not significantly. In terms of critical path, we have an active, existing contract with American Divers, who have been working at the project for a couple of years now; our plan, to save time, is to negotiate a change to their existing contract to allow them to do the work that would be required in FY'00, Mason said. While we don't need a decision today, Corps engineers have already begun to work on the design of the modifications Lynn and Steve have described to you today. We're estimating that those modifications will cost in the neighborhood of \$2 million, he said. However, we need to be in a position to start work on October 1 if we're going to get these modifications done by April 2000. Reece noted that the information generated by the 1999 test allowed the Corps to save a significant amount on the FY'00 test program – the total program has been reduced from about \$10 million to about \$7 million, thanks to improved BGS performance in 1999.

Boyce said he is still a little unclear on the objectives of the FY'00 Lower Granite surface bypass test program; Mason said the Corps' intent is to update the current FY'00 work plan and distribute it for review. From my perspective, said Rainey, one goal is to improve the entrance of juvenile fish into the SBC; we would also like the FY'00 objectives to include a more precise understanding of the hydraulics associated with this structure, and fish response to those hydraulics. Improved ability to track individual fish, with possible applications to other locations, would be another objective I would like to see met in 2000, Rainey said. It still isn't clear in my mind what the overriding goal of the FY'00 test will be, said Boyce – if the Corps could update the workplan to provide detailed information on the objectives, schedule and cost of the 2000 test, that would be very helpful.

How will the information from the 1999 testing at Lower Granite, and from future years of testing, feed into the Corps' Lower Snake EIS process? Marv Yoshinaka asked. Of course, the EIS process is nearing completion, Mason replied; if everything stays on track, that decision will be made before we begin testing again in the spring of 2000. If the option chosen is improved surface collection with transportation, then obviously there

is more work to be done in this arena; in fact, it would probably fit into any non-drawdown scenario.

In general, said Reece, much of the work in the Feasibility Study is based on the 1998 Lower Granite surface bypass data, which was very encouraging – the 1999 data, to me, are equally encouraging, both for Lower Granite and for other projects in the system. That's one of the things I like about this program, said Ruff – the possibility that we will be able to transfer and apply what is learned at Lower Granite to other projects.

In response to a question from Hevlin, Mason said the FY'00 cost of this program is now \$7.4 million, down from an initial estimate of \$10 million; that \$7.4 million could be reduced by another \$500,000, depending on what comes out of Cowlitz Falls. Also, said Hevlin, is it true that we don't necessarily have to do this 2000 test at all to pursue the raised crest test in 2001? That's correct, Mason replied. Given that fact, Hevlin said, I would agree with Ron that the objectives for the 2000 test are extremely important – much will depend on what level of budget we wind up with.

It sounds, then, as though the SCT would like the Corps to provide them with a clearer set of objectives for the 2000 test at Lower Granite, Collis said. Is there anything else that is needed at this time, from a process or decision standpoint? Rainey noted that some of the 3-D model outputs might be helpful, in clarifying the potential of the 2000 test at Lower Granite; Reece added that there is some additional testing ongoing at Lower Granite this summer; we should have results from that within the next week or two, he said, and it may be helpful for the SCT to look at that as well.

Ruff noted that, on the SCT's current FY'00 CRFM ranking spreadsheet, the Lower Granite surface bypass program does not make the \$70 million funding cutoff; instead, it comes in at about \$89 million. That's because the states decided to withhold a ranking for this project until FFDRWG could weigh in at its most recent meeting; it sounds as though we now need to re-rank that project, prior to the August SCT meeting, to see whether it would move up or down in relative priority, Ruff said.

Mason said the Corps will distribute a more detailed FY'00 workplan for the Lower Granite surface bypass program to the SCT within the next two weeks.

Did the Corps consider simply re-testing the 1999 configuration in 2000, to provide more and better biological information to correlate the numerical/hydraulic model? Jim Nielsen asked. That was discussed extensively within Walla Walla District, Reece replied; however, given the fact that this structure has only one year of testing life remaining, the decision was made that it would be more useful to make some of the changes we've talked about here today. In response to another question from Nielsen, Mason said it would cost about \$5.5 million to re-test the 1999 configuration in 2000.

III. FY'01 CRFM Program.

Hevlin said the Corps had distributed a very preliminary FY'01 CRFM program spreadsheet at the last SCT meeting. The point of handing this out was simply to lay out,

in a general sense, the items the Corps felt would go into the FY'01 CRFM program we will be submitting to Congress, Kranda explained; we wanted to give the SCT an early opportunity to look this over, to be sure it includes everything it should. Kranda noted that the current list of FY'01 CRFM program items totals \$113 million, although, as the SCT is aware, it is unlikely that Congress will approve the full amount, he said.

Regardless of the decision that comes out of the Lower Snake EIS and the new BiOp – drawdown or no drawdown – what would be the next steps in planning for a breaching option? Ruff asked. Why shouldn't we plan for that, in the event the region decides to go in that direction? For the breaching option itself, we would need to move into PED – Preliminary Engineering and Design, Kranda replied. There will be some additional decisions that would need to be made as well, if dam breaching is the option chosen – some of the items on the FY'01 project list would no longer be needed if drawdown is the route we choose to go.

My point is that preliminary engineering and design of a dam breaching option isn't referenced anywhere on the current spreadsheet, said Ruff; it probably should be. We need to know how long it would take, how much it would cost etc. Mason noted that the Corps has estimated that \$8 million would be needed for the first year of PED for a dam breaching option; if that is the option chosen, he said, there will be plenty of funds available, because of the other projects that would fall off the table under a drawdown alternative.

I'm less concerned about whether or not there would be money available than I am about exactly what needs to get done to get the ball rolling on drawdown engineering and design, and what is the critical path to complete this work, so that you've optioned it, and we don't lose a year – in other words, so that it will be there on the shelf, and we can pull it down and dust it off if necessary, Ruff said. We know what needs to be done next, Mason replied – we have looked at that, and it will cost \$8 million the first year. It's not explicitly laid out in the current spreadsheet, but there are adequate funds included in that program to allow us to complete the work that needs to be done in FY'01, if that's the direction the region decides to go.

Ruff suggested that it may make sense for the Corps to develop two FY'01 CRFM budgets – one that lays out the items that would be needed under a “breach” option, the other laying out the items that would be needed under a “no breach” option. I think that makes a lot of sense, Yoshinaka agreed. After a few minutes of discussion, however, given the multitude of drawdown and non-drawdown alternatives on the table, and the difficulty of deciding which CRFM items would still be needed under each alternative, it was agreed that, at least for the time being, the Corps will simply add an \$8 million line-item to the current spreadsheet, to cover drawdown PED. Collis left the door open for the SCT to reconsider this question at a future meeting.

IV. FY'00 CRFM Program.

Ruff said the tribes are putting forth their best efforts to develop their list of FY'00 CRFM program rankings in time for presentation and discussion at the August SCT meeting. Ruff added that he also needs to touch base, prior to that meeting, with Steve Pettit, to make sure the states' list includes Idaho's rankings and recommendations.

V. FFDRWG Updates.

Rock Peters distributed Enclosure E, the most recent CENWP AFEP FFDRWG update, recapping items discussed at the July 19 FFDRWG meeting. These topics of discussion included the John Day ESBS evaluation, John Day surface collection, the end bay deflector, The Dalles surface collection, Bonneville forebay physical guidance device, Bonneville surface collection, the gas abatement program, the turbine survival program, juvenile lamprey studies, Bonneville outfall and DSM, Bonneville adult fallback, Bonneville 1 FGE, Bonneville 2 FGE and The Dalles combined sluiceway outfall relocation. Please see Enclosure E for details of Peters' presentation. He added that the next Portland District FFDRWG meeting is scheduled for September 28, beginning at 9 a.m. at Portland District Headquarters.

VI. Next SCT Meeting Date.

The next meeting of the System Configuration Team was changed to Thursday, August 26, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at NMFS' Portland offices. Meeting notes prepared by Jeff Kuechle, BPA contractor.